Essential reading on Persian Gulf War

Desert Slaughter: The Imperialist War Against Iraq, Labor Publications, ISBN 0 929087 54 2

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Desert Slaughter: The Imperialist War Against Iraq provides a Marxist analysis of the 1991 Persian Gulf War and is essential reading for all those looking for an objective historical explanation of the driving forces behind the current US-led war against Iraq. Published 12 years ago, this critical 523-page book contains key statements, articles and comments written at each stage of the war and its aftermath by the Workers League, forerunner of the Socialist Equality Party in the United States.

The volume makes clear that the 1991 Persian Gulf War heralded the beginning of a new imperialist redivision of the world, with US capitalism attempting to use its military power to offset its declining position in the world economy vis-à-vis its major rivals. The result was at least 250,000 Iraqi soldiers killed and the deaths of hundreds of thousands of civilians, either through the savage bombing campaign, or from disease and starvation in the aftermath of the war.

"Workers Must Oppose Gulf War," a resolution adopted in September 1990, is one of many prescient statements included in the book. It warns: "Despite the initial unity of the imperialists against Iraq, their attempt to plunder the resources of the Middle East will inevitably provoke intensifying conflicts between the major powers."

Desert Slaughter exposes the secret White House operations to draw Saddam Hussein into an invasion of neighbouring Kuwait, and thus provide the long-awaited pretext for the US to militarily intervene in this oil-rich region. It explains the sordid manoeuvring in the United Nations by the US and other major powers, including the Soviet Union and China, that resulted in UN sponsorship for the horrendous carnage.

The volume provides a damning indictment of the labour parties and the trade unions, which either directly assisted in the war or vehemently opposed any mobilisation of the working class against it. The volume also includes a detailed history of colonial oppression in Iraq and the Middle East and explains why the Arab national leadership has been unable to mount any consistent struggle against it.

Complementing this analysis is a compelling exposure of the crude lies and propaganda of the corporate-run media and, in the aftermath of the war, the tragic suppression of Shi'ite and Kurdish uprisings by the Iraqi military, both revolts deliberately encouraged and then betrayed by the US.

Above all, *Desert Slaughter* provides irrefutable evidence that imperialist war cannot be stopped through protests to the ruling classes and their government representatives or the United Nations, but only through a unified socialist movement of the international working class against the source of war—the profit system.

Desert Slaughter is available for $US18.95, £10 or $A24.95, plus postage. The book can be purchased from our online bookshop or by contacting Mehring Books: sales@mehring.com in the US; sales@mehringbooks.co.uk in the UK; and mehring@ozemail.com.au in Australia.

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